THE HON'BLE MR JUSTICE L. NARASIMHA REDDY

Writ Petition No.35916 of 1998

Dated 22-11-2007

Between:
Sangani Ganikamma
and others

…Petitioners

And
District Collector, East-Godavari
and others

…Respondents

THE HON'BLE MR JUSTICE L. NARASIMHA REDDY

Writ Petition No.35916 of 1998

ORDER:

A Cyclone has taken place in the year 1996, affecting the life and property in the Coastal districts, particularly, East-Godavari District. Number of Fishermen are said to have died. The Government issued G.O.Ms.No.466, Revenue (Relief-I) Department, dated 31-05-1997, in this regard, providing for payment of compensation, to the kin of the deceased. The District Collector, East-Godavari, was conferred with the power to cause necessary inspection, and to pay the *ex-gratia* of Rs.1 lakh, to the kin of the persons, who died in the cyclone. A direction was issued to pay initially, a sum of Rs.5,000/-.

The petitioners contend that many of their kin died in the cyclone, and they were paid a sum of Rs.5,000/- each,
as contemplated under the G.O. Their grievance is that subsequent verification, and payment of the balance, was not undertaken so far, in spite of repeated representations. Reference is made to the order of this Court, passed by a Division Bench,
in Writ Appeal No.1242 of 1998, as well as the one, passed in W.P.No.29363 of 1998.

In the counter-affidavit, filed on behalf of the respondents, various steps, that have been taken, in the matter of extension of the benefit under the G.O., were referred to. It is stated that the claims, contrary to the guidelines contained in the G.O., were presented in several cases, and that the verification has also revealed that the claims were not genuine.

Heard the learned counsel for the petitioners and learned Government Pleader for Revenue.

The very fact that a portion of the sum, being Rs.5,000/-, was extended to the petitioners; discloses the *prima facie* recognition of their claims. The further enquiry is contemplated to verify whether the person, who was found missing had, in fact, died, and if so,
his kin, who are entitled for the benefit; are to be identified. The G.O.,

has also stipulated a ceiling of Rs.1 lakh, as *ex-gratia*. It is no doubt true, that the respondents have narrated the steps taken by them, on the claims made by the petitioners and others. However, unless the petitioners are informed about the stages, or the decision taken on their claims, they would not be in a position to pursue the remedies, or to reconcile to the situation.

Hence, the writ petition is disposed of, directing the respondents herein to intimate the petitioners, within two months from the date of receipt of a copy of this order; as to the steps taken, on the claims presented by them.

There shall be no order as to costs.

L. NARASIMHA REDDY, J.

Dt.22-11-2007

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